

ORAL QUESTION FOR MONDAY 17th JULY 2023
(To be answered by the Minister in person under Standing Order 13(3A))

Deputy L.V. Feltham will ask the following question of the Minister for Housing and Communities –

“Further to the response to [Written Question 302/2023](#) and recent statements from the Minister for Treasury and Resources that residents only have to reside in the Island for one day for tax purposes, will the Minister explain how these positions tally with his own objective of “ensuring that as many homes as possible are actively occupied by Islanders at all times” as stated in his report, ‘Action on Vacant Properties’?”

The following response was provided in writing in accordance with Standing Order 63(9) as the oral question was not asked before the end of the time allowed for Oral Questions:

Answer

My position is, and always has been, that as many homes as possible should be occupied.

However, the Tax and the Control of Housing and Work Law are separate matters – and it is unhelpful to conflate the two.

Being normally resident for the Control of Housing and Work Law **expects** you to live in Jersey. Unfortunately, however, there is no way to police this – we don’t count islanders in and out, nor monitor their movement... and neither should we.

I would also highlight that my published definition of a vacant home includes “where the property is not someone’s main residence and for it to be vacant for a period of longer than 12 months”. The circumstances described in this question meet neither of those tests.

I am absolutely clear that I don’t want to see vacant homes in Jersey. I really do hope that residents are not holding homes empty, and I doubt that they are. However, if the Deputy has any information on such cases, I would remind her that these can be reported through the Empty Homes Service, and we will look into the matter.